GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2267
ANSWERED ON:15.12.2008
DIVERSIFICATION OF AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps are being taken for the diversification of agricultural activities to produce commercial crops with a view to encouraging agro based industries; and

(b) if so,the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a) & (b): To increase production and productivity of Horticulture, Oilseeds & Pulses crops and to promote crop diversification, following Centrally Sponsored Schemes are implemented:

1. National Horticulture Mission.

2. Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM).

National Horticulture Mission is implemented for the holistic development of horticulture sector covering Fruits, Spices, Flowers, Aromatic & Medicinal Plants, Plantation crops of Cashew and Coca, which also promote diversification in agriculture. The Mission envisages an end-to-end approach covering production, post harvest management, processing and marketing to assure appropriate returns to growers / producers. Under the Mission, cluster approach is being adopted for developing a production base not only for fresh consumption but also for providing raw material to the agro based industries and also for setting up of infrastructures for post harvest management, processing and marketing. Under Mission, only primary/mobile processing of horticulture produce is covered. The major programme of processing and value addition of horticulture produce is promoted by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries out of their scheme.

In addition, a Centrally Sponsored Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) was launched in 2007-08 with an outlay of Rs.25000 crores for XI Plan to incentivise States to invest and reorient agricultural development strategies which also aims to promote among others crop diversification as well. In sugarcane, thrust areas like development of varieties suitable for non-traditional uses like ethanol, co-generation and high fibre content, exploratory studies on the use of sugarcane for production of ethanol from biomass using microorganisms etc., developing varieties with higher biomass production, identification of suitable species and clones as captive resource of fibre for paper industries, development of management techniques for improving ethanol yield and studies on environmental issue arising from enhanced production of ethanol as bio-fuel and developing strategies to mitigate the problems arising thereof are identified during XI Plan period.

Diversified products of Jute are encouraging agro based industries. The diversified products of Jute namely Geo textile, Yarn, Jute, Jute carpet are important products. Further Jute stick is utilized for particle board and jute whole plant is used for paper pulp.

Soybean is introduced into many cotton growing regions, especially the Vidharbha and adjoining regions of Maharashtra to be grown either as intercrop, strip crop or in rotation with cotton. Cultivation of soybean is encouraged because it is fetching good remuneration and the soybean products which are processed through agro-based industries.